

Education Cabinet

Visor Communication Cards reduce barriers for deaf, hard of hearing motorists

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FRANKFORT, KY – Miscommunication between deaf and hard of hearing motorists and police officers in tense moments such as traffic stops, has and continues to produce potentially dire consequences nationwide.

In an effort to prevent such situations in the Commonwealth, the Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (KCDHH) has partnered with the Kentucky State Police (KSP) to introduce the Visor Communication Card program.

The lightweight, double-sided, laminate cards contain pictures to represent basic requests, violations and roadside assistance questions used by police officers in routine traffic stops. The back of the card contains instructions for how to effectively communicate with motorists who are deaf, oral deaf or hard of hearing. Deaf and hard of hearing motorists would keep the card in their car's visor.

"Communication is a facet of everyday life that we take for granted. For deaf and hard of hearing people, it's a challenge," said Virginia Moore, interim executive director of KCDHH. "For police officers, it is a challenge. So when these two groups come together, communication needs to be quick and effective. This card is not the answer to everything but it gets communication started to help with something people encounter every day."

More than 200 deaf, oral deaf and hard of hearing motorists have applied for Visor Communication Cards inside the first week of the program's existence, with thousands more expected in the coming months.

KCDHH began offering Visor Communication Cards through both the agency's Web site and by paper applications during the first week of January.

The cards are designed to fit under the vehicle's sun visor and should be stored there at all times. In order to prevent miscommunication with law enforcement officials, never store the card in the glove compartment or center console of the vehicle.

Consumers may apply for a card by filling out an online application through the agency's Web site (www.kcdhh.ky.gov) or by contacting KCDHH directly and requesting a hard copy application to

complete and return. Cards are limited to one per applicant and the program is open to Kentucky residents only.

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The Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing has spent a quarter century providing effective and efficient leadership, education, advocacy and programs to eliminate barriers and to meet the social, economic, cultural and intellectual needs of deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians. For more information, contact:

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